

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 PRS-01 SAJ-01 SPC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7829

INFO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 14441

LIMDIS

E.O. LL652: GDS

TAGS: PTOV, PFOR, UR, GW

SUBJECT: FRG FONOFF SPECULATION ABOUT POSSIBLE SOVIET
FOREIGN MINISTRY PERSONNEL CHANGES

L. IN TALK WITH EMBOFF, FRG FONOFF'S SOVIET DIVISION
CHIEF GAVE HIS THOUGHTS ON POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE TOP
LEVELS OF THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY. OUR SOURCE SAID
THAT SOME OF HIS COMMENTS WERE SPECULATIVE WHILE OTHERS
WERE BASED ON TALKS WITH THE SOVIET POLITICAL COUNSELOR
WHO RECENTLY RETURNED TO BONN FROM A STAY IN MOSCOW.

2. OUR CONTACT SAID THAT THE FRG FONOFF BELIEF IS THAT,
BY THE END OF THE YEAR, GROMYKO WILL STEP DOWN FROM THE
FOREIGN MINISTER POST AND DEVOTE HIMSELF TO HIS CENTRAL
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COMMITTEE WORK. HE COULD CONCEIVABLY ALSO BECOME A

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. THE FRG FONOFF VIEW IS THAT GROMYKO WILL BE REPLACED BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, DOBRYNIN. THE GERMANS ARE PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY THE FACT THAT GROMYKO AND DOBRYNIN WERE ACTIVE TOGETHER IN NEW YORK AT THE OPENING WORK OF THE UNGA, WHEREAS MALIK (THE SOVIETS' UN AMBASSADOR) PLAYED A MUCH LESSER ROLE.

3. SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO BONN, FALIN, WHO HAS BEEN ABSENT FROM BONN SINCE MID-JUNE WILL, ACCORDING TO A FONOFF SOURCE, NOT BE RETURNING TO BONN EXCEPT FOR POSSIBLY A SHORT STAY IN THE LATE FALL TO MAKE HIS FAREWELL CALLS. WE ARE TOLD THAT FALIN WILL BE GIVEN THE POST OF DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, IN EFFECT REPLACING SEMYONOV WHO IS NOW TOTALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS. FALIN WOULD REPORTEDLY HANDLE GERMANY AND DISARMAMENT MATTERS IN HIS NEW POSITION. OUR SOURCE WAS NOT INFORMED AS TO WHO MIGHT REPLACE FALIN IN BONN.

4. THE FONOFF REPRESENTATIVE SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT FALIN'S NON-RETURN WAS DUE TO MEDICAL PROBLEMS. (FALIN DID HAVE AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT IN MOSCOW DURING THE SUMMER BUT IT WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN QUITE MINOR). OUR SOURCE SAID HE PERSONALLY DOUBTED THIS EXPLANATION, HOWEVER, AND WAS MUCH MORE CONVINCED THAT SOME BUREAUCRATIC MANEUVERING HAD BEEN GOING ON IN THE FOREIGN POLICY-MAKING FIELD IN MOSCOW AND THAT THE "LIBERAL" WING HAD WON OUT. HE NOTED THAT IF DOBRYNIN AND FALIN WERE AT THE TOP OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, THE WEST MIGHT STAND TO GAIN. THE FRG IN PARTICULAR MIGHT BENEFIT FROM FALIN'S PROMOTION SINCE SOMEBODY WHO UNDERSTOOD WEST GERMAN AFFAIRS WOULD BE IN A POLICY-MAKING POSITION AT LAST.

5. COMMENT: WE FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO EVALUATE THIS EVALUATION OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS FROM HERE. WE ARE REPORTING IT, HOWEVER, SINCE THE SOURCE IS USUALLY A SOLID AND RELIABLE OBSERVER OF THE SOVIET SCENE.
HILLENBRAND

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